

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 03572 182330Z

73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

HEW-08 DRC-01 /151 W

----- 128530

R 182301Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5284

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 3572

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, HO

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH MINLAB FONSECA

DURING A CALL I MADE UPON HIM AT HIS OFFICE SEPTEMBER
17, LABOR MINISTER GUATAMA FONSECA, AMONG OTHERS, MADE
THE FOLLOWING TWO IMPORTANT POINTS:

1. THERE HAS NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS A SMALL WORKING GROUP WHICH MEETS REGULARLY
TO HANDLE DAY TO DAY GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND CRISES.
FORMED AT THE INITIATIVE OF LABOR MINISTER FONSECA AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER BATRES, AND WITH THE APPROVAL
OF CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ, THE GROUP INCLUDES: FONSECA;
BATRES; MANUEL ACOSTA, FINANCE MINISTER; ABRAHAM BENNATON,
MINISTER OF ECONOMY; AND COL JUAN MELGAR, MINISTER OF
GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO FONSECA COL MELGAR SERVES AS
PRESIDING OFFICER QUOTE SINCE HE HAS NO VESTED INTEREST AND
NO CONSITUENCY UNQUOTE. WHEN THE GROUP IS DEALING WITH THE
AFFAIRS OF A MINISTRY NOT REPRESENTED IN THE WORKING
GROUP THAT MINISTER IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE.

2. THE GOH IS STILL WORKING ON ITS MINIMUM WAGE DECREE.
FONSECA CITED CERTAIN STUDIES SHOWING THAT THE CURRENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEGUCI 03572 182330Z

AVERAGE WAGE IN HONDURAS IS 1.85 LEMPIRAS (2 LEMPIRAS

EQUAL \$1 US) DAILY AND THAT TO PURCHASE SUFFICIENT FOOD CALORIES IN TEGUCIGALPA ONE NEEDS 4.8 LEMPIRAS DAILY. DURING EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFFS FONSECA HAD CONFIDENTLY DISCUSSED LEVELS AND LIKELY DATES OF THE IMPOSITION OF THE DECREE BUT UPON THIS INSTANCE HE DID NOT DISCUSS EITHER LEVELS OR TIME TABLES AND QUICKLY MOVED TO ANOTHER SUBJECT. ONE OF THE DATES EARLIER MENTIONED BY THE MINISTER AS LIKELY FOR THE ISSUANCE OF THE DECREE WAS SEPTEMBER 15, THE NATIONAL DAY OF HONDURAS, WHICH HAD PASSED JUST TWO DAYS EARLIER WITHOUT MENTION OF SUCH A DECREE.

COMMENT: MINISTER FONSECA HAS BEEN A CONSISTENT TARGET OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND RUMORS PREDICTING HIS IMMEDIATE FIRING BY THE CHIEF OF STATE HAVE BEEN FREQUENT. HOWEVER, HIS ROLE IN FORMING THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WORKING GRUP AND HIS CURRENT PARTICIPATION IN THAT GROUP LIKELY INDICATE THAT HIS POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE CHIEF OF STATE IS SECURE FOR THE TIME BEING. MINISTER FONSECA'S RELUCTANCE TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF THE MINIMUM WAGE DECREE IN DEPTH, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF HIS EARLIER CONFIDENCE ABOUT THIS MATTER, IS PROBABLY A GOOD INDICATION OF THE INTENSITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR OPPOSITION TO THIS MEASURE. IT MAY ALSO REFLECT THAT THIS PRESSURE IS BEGINNING TO BE FELT BY THE CHIEF OF STATE.
SANCHEZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MINIMUM WAGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: collinp0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TEGUCI03572
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SANCHEZ
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730926/aaaaaswt.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <01 MAR 2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONVERSATION WITH MINLAB FONSECA DURING A CALL I MADE UPON HIM AT HIS OFFICE SEPTEMBER
TAGS: PFOR, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005